

Recreational fishing vessel means any vessel from which no fishing other than recreational fishing is conducted. Charter and head boats and commercial dive vessels are not considered recreational fishing vessels.

Regional Administrator, means Regional Administrator, Northeast Region, NMFS, or Regional Administrator, Southeast Region, NMFS, whichever has the applicable jurisdiction, or a respective designee.

Retain means to fail to return any species specified under § 697.7 of this chapter to the sea immediately after the hook has been removed or after the species has otherwise been released from the capture gear.

Sea sampler/observer means any person required or authorized to be carried on a vessel for conservation and management purposes by regulations or permits.

Shrimp trawl net means any trawl net that is rigged for fishing and has a mesh size less than 2.50 inches (6.35 cm), as measured between the centers of opposite knots when pulled taut, and each trawl net, as defined in § 622.2 of this chapter, that is rigged for fishing and has a headrope length longer than 16 ft (4.9 m).

Standard V-shaped notch means a notch or indentation in the base of the flipper that is at least as deep as 1/8 inch (0.32 cm), with or without setal hairs.

Stocked Atlantic sturgeon means any Atlantic sturgeon cultured in a hatchery that is placed in rivers and ocean waters of the Atlantic Coast to enhance the Atlantic sturgeon spawning stocks.

TED means Turtle Excluder Device, which is a device designed to be installed in a trawl net forward of the codend for the purpose of excluding sea turtles from the net.

Trawl means a cone or funnel-shaped net that is towed through the water, and can include a pair trawl that is towed simultaneously by two boats.

V-notched American lobster means any female American lobster bearing a V-shaped notch in the flipper next to and to the right of the center flipper as viewed from the rear of the lobster (underside of the lobster down and tail toward the viewer), or any female Amer-

ican lobster that is mutilated in a manner that could hide or obliterate such a mark.

Weakfish means members of the stock or population of the species *Cynoscion regalis*, found along the Atlantic Coast from southern Florida to Massachusetts Bay.

Whole American lobster means a lobster with an intact and measurable body (tail and carapace). An American lobster with an intact and measurable body that is missing one or both claws, i.e., a cull lobster, is considered to be a whole American lobster.

Zero tolerance V-shaped notch means a v-shaped notch of any size, with or without straight sides, with or without setal hairs.

(b) [Reserved]

[64 FR 68248, Dec. 6, 1999, as amended at 66 FR 8911, Feb. 5, 2001; 66 FR 14501, Mar. 13, 2001; 68 FR 14925, Mar. 27, 2003; 68 FR 56790, Oct. 2, 2003; 71 FR 13037, Mar. 14, 2006; 73 FR 58061, Oct. 6, 2008; 74 FR 37549, July 29, 2009]

§ 697.3 Relation to other Federal and state laws.

(a) The provisions of sections 307 through 311 of the Magnuson-Stevens Act, as amended, regarding prohibited acts, civil penalties, criminal offenses, civil forfeitures, and enforcement apply with respect to the regulations in this part, as if the regulations in this part were issued under the Magnuson-Stevens Act.

(b) The relation of this part to other laws is further set forth in § 600.705 of this chapter and would include all regulations and statutes administered by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), including, but not limited to the regulations in this part issued pursuant to the ACFCMA, the regulations at 50 CFR part 229 issued pursuant to the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) and the Endangered Species Act (ESA), and the regulations at 50 CFR part 648 issued pursuant to the Magnuson-Stevens Act.

(c) The regulations in this part do not preempt more restrictive state laws, or state enforcement of more restrictive state laws, with respect to weakfish fishing and American lobster fishing. If a requirement of this part and a management measure required

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by state or local law differ, any vessel owner permitted to fish in the EEZ must comply with the more restrictive requirement or measure.

[64 FR 68248, Dec. 6, 1999, as amended at 71 FR 13037, Mar. 14, 2006]

§ 697.4 Vessel permits and trap tags.

(a) *Limited access American lobster permit.* Any vessel of the United States that fishes for, possesses, or lands American lobster in or harvested from the EEZ must have been issued and carry on board a valid Federal limited access lobster permit. This requirement does not apply to: charter, head, and commercial dive vessels that possess six or fewer American lobsters per person aboard the vessel if such lobsters are not intended for, nor used, in trade, barter or sale; recreational fishing vessels; and vessels that fish exclusively in state waters for American lobster.

(1) *Eligibility in 1999 and thereafter.* To be eligible for issuance or renewal of a Federal limited access lobster permit for fishing year 1999 and thereafter, a vessel must:

(i) Have been issued a Federal limited access lobster permit for the preceding fishing year by the last day of such fishing year unless a CPH has been issued as specified in paragraph (a)(5) of this section or unless otherwise authorized by the Regional Administrator;

(ii) Be replacing a vessel that was issued a Federal limited access lobster permit for the preceding year; or

(iii) Be replacing a vessel issued a CPH.

(2) *Qualification restriction.* Unless the Regional Administrator determines otherwise, no more than one vessel may qualify, at any one time, for a Federal limited access lobster permit based on that or another vessel's fishing and permit history. If more than one vessel owner claims eligibility for a limited access permit, based on one vessel's fishing and permit history, the Regional Administrator will determine who is eligible for the permit or a CPH under paragraph (a)(3) of this section.

(3) *Change in ownership.* The fishing and permit history, and management area designation, when required of a vessel, is presumed to transfer with the

vessel whenever it is bought, sold or otherwise transferred, unless there is a written agreement, signed by the transferor/seller and transferee/buyer, or other credible written evidence, verifying that the transferor/seller is retaining the vessel's fishing and permit history, and management area designation, for the purposes of replacing the vessel.

(4) *Consolidation restriction.* Federal limited access American lobster permits, and any rights or privileges associated thereto, may not be combined or consolidated.

(5) *Confirmation of permit history.* Notwithstanding any other provisions of this part, a person who does not currently own a fishing vessel, but who has owned a qualifying vessel that has sunk, been destroyed, or transferred to another person, must apply for and receive a CPH if the fishing and permit history of such vessel has been retained lawfully by the applicant. To be eligible to obtain a CPH, the applicant must show that the qualifying vessel meets the eligibility requirements, as applicable, in this part. Issuance of a valid CPH preserves the eligibility of the applicant to apply for a limited access permit for a replacement vessel based on the qualifying vessel's fishing and permit history at a subsequent time, subject to the replacement provisions specified in this section. If fishing privileges have been assigned or allocated previously under this part, based on the qualifying vessel's fishing and permit history, the CPH also preserves such fishing privileges. A CPH must be applied for in order for the applicant to preserve the fishing rights and limited access eligibility of the qualifying vessel. An application for a CPH must be received by the Regional Administrator no later than 30 days prior to the end of the first full fishing year in which a vessel permit cannot be issued. Failure to do so is considered abandonment of the permit as described in paragraph (o) of this section. A CPH issued under this part will remain valid until the fishing and permit history preserved by the CPH is used to qualify a replacement vessel for a limited access permit. Any decision regarding the issuance of a CPH for a qualifying vessel that has been applied for or been